







## DAVIS-MONTHAN AVIATION FIELD REGISTER

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## ARTHUR C. GOEBEL

"Say, folks, it's great to be here."

Arthur C. Goebel was born October 19, 1895. He landed at Tucson five times between 1928 and 1931. Among his many achievements, he holds the distinction of being the only pilot to suggest obscenity in the Airfield Register. On February 13, 1931 he wrote in the Remarks column, "!\*!?!XX weather"! We have to forgive him, though, because it was February and he was traveling westbound from [El Paso, TX](#) to [Los Angeles, CA](#), probably into the teeth of prevailing winter winds.



**Learning to Fly in 1920**  
Image From His Book

Goebel served in World War I (not as a pilot). He learned to fly in 1920 in California. Image, left, shows him during his student pilot days.

In the late 1920s, he belonged to the "[Thirteen Black Cats of Hollywood](#)," movie stunt fliers.

Another member of the Cats was [Paul Richter](#). His flying skills and detailed preparation for movie scenes led to success and notoriety as his flying career proceeded.

Image, below right, of Goebel (left) with a cameraman preparing for a movie shot.



**Arthur C. Goebel, ca. 1929**  
Image From His Book, Right



During the 1930s he entered the U.S. Army Air Corps Reserves. During WWII he served with distinction as a pilot and Air Inspector of the IV Bomber Command in the Pacific Theater. He rose to the rank of Colonel.

For his achievements in the late 1920s (see the Dole Race, below) he accepted honors from the President of the United States (Coolidge), standing shoulder to shoulder with the likes of [Charles Lindbergh](#) (trans-Atlantic), Bernt Balchen (North & South Pole), [William Brock & Edward Schlee](#) (round-the-world) and [Lester Maitland](#) & [Albert Hegenberger](#) (trans-Pacific).

A year later, in August, 1928, Goebel flew the Lockheed Vega NX4789, the "Yankee Doodle" (not a Register airplane) from coast to coast in 18 hours and 58 minutes. This was the same airplane that, in November, Register pilot [C.B.D. Collyer](#) would meet his end.

In 1931 Goebel flew a Lockheed aircraft (Vega Model 5 [NR7954](#), the first "Winnie Mae") in the first Bendix Trophy race from Los Angeles to Cleveland, OH. He placed fifth behind first-place winner James H. Doolittle. To see an image of this airplane, please follow this link to the [Klein Archive of Aviation Photographs](#).

In 1941 he married Ann Jergens, heir to the Jergens cosmetics empire. Their marriage ended in divorce in 1947. He never remarried. In the 1960s he was inducted as an honorary member into The Society of Experimental Test Pilots.

For additional images of A.C. Goebel, see this [link to his section of the C.B. Cosgrove Collection on this site](#).

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One of Goebel's premier accomplishments, and a real milestone for him during the late 1920's was his flight across the Pacific Ocean from [Oakland, CA](#) to Honolulu in a Travel Air transport named "Woolaroc". Below, Goebel loads radio equipment in his airplane as part of the fastidious preparations he made for the event.



**Art Goebel (L) Prepping for Movies. Image is From His Book**





**Goebel Loads Radio Equipment, 1927  
Image is From His Book**

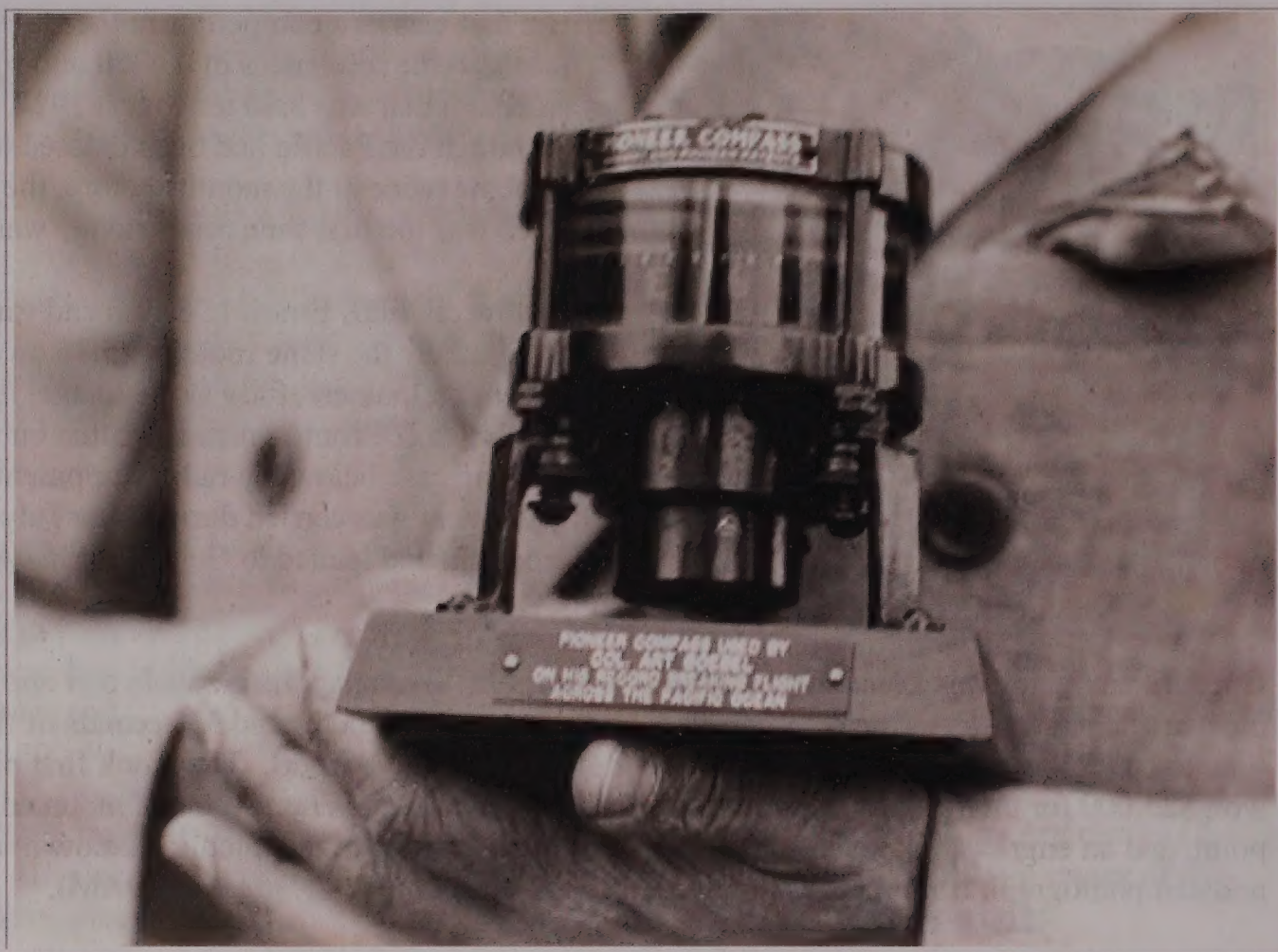
His feat was as a competitor in the [Dole Race](#) (see also the references in the left and right sidebars) that was held in August 1927. Although the Pacific had been crossed by airplane twice in the months before, the Dole Race was the first time prize money was offered.

Fellow civilians Ernest L. Smith and Emory Bronte flew the same route in 25:36 on July 14-15. If you look carefully at the image, left, you'll see Smith & Bronte's names written on the packing case below the radio equipment. This equipment was carried during their July 15th crossing, and loaned to Goebel for his August attempt.

Goebel's navigator was Lieutenant William V. Davis Jr., an Annapolis graduate and one of the most astute navigators of the era. It took them 26 hours, 17 minutes and 33 seconds of flying time to cover the 2,400 miles of ocean once they left Oakland Airport. They took first place and won \$25,000 for their efforts. The compass from his airplane was removed and mounted at some point, and an engraved plate was placed on the wooden platform. It is pictured below in an undated photograph from the [San Diego Aerospace Museum Flickr Stream](#) (SDAM).

#### **Woolaroc Compass, Date Unknown (Source: SDAM)**





One of the flight's sponsors was the [Phillips Petroleum Company](#). At the link, to the American Oil & Gas Historical Society Web site, is a description of the company's aviation activities, including the Dole Race and the "Woolaroc."

There is good Web presence for the Dole Race. The images linked above in the Cosgrove Collection show him with the "Woolaroc". Below, from Goebel's book, the "Woolaroc" at Santa Monica after its return to the U.S. by ship. From the crowds you can see that this race was a big deal at the time! Note the "Fly With Bob" sign on the hangar, top right. Hats were very popular.





**"Woolaroc" at Santa Monica, CA, 1929  
Image From Goebel's Book (Right Sidebar)**

*Time Magazine*, Monday, Aug. 29, 1927, had this to say about the Dole Race:

"'Say, folks, it's great to be here.' With these words the flight for the \$25,000 prize offered by James D. Dole, 'pineapple king,' ended at Wheeler Field, Honolulu. Arthur C. Goebel stepped out of his plane, the Woolaroc, and waved to 30,003 assembled under the clear blue Hawaiian sky. The small figure of a woman raced up to him, exclaiming: 'God bless you, where is Martin?' She was Mrs. Martin Jensen, wife of a pilot in the flight. Two hours later Martin Jensen swung his Aloha down from Hawaiian sky, jumped out, into the arms of Mrs. Martin. He had won the second prize, \$10,000.

"Eighteen airplanes entered for the prize. Eight started. Two crashed; two turned back; two disappeared; two finished.

"Sifting qualifications, testing ships (three pilots dying in the process), bickering a little, postponing the starting time, those concerned in the Dole



prize flight to Hawaii finally set their stage.

"Bennet Griffin, flying the Oklahoma, rose from the ground at Oakland, Calif., for the first takeoff, and the race was on. At intervals behind him rose John W. Frost flying the Golden Eagle; Capt. W. P. Erwin flying the Dallas Spirit; J. Auggy Pedlar flying the Miss Doran (carrying with him Miss Mildred Doran, school teacher from Flint, Mich.); Goebel; and Jensen. Pabco Flyer and El Encanto crashed at the start. Soon Erwin returned with an unlucky windhole in his fuselage. Soon Griffin returned, his engine failing. Out over the blue Pacific flew Goebel, Jensen; Frost, Pedlar; and their navigators; and Pedlar's passenger.

"The Woolaroc flew smoothly. In the night an oil brush slipped under the floor boards, and began a pounding vibration; a sound like pistons blowing. Goebel and his pilot, W. C. Davis, seized the water bottle and emergency rations and began peering below them for a soft spot in the sea. The brush vibrated itself into sight. They flew on. They saw land. They saw planes coming to meet them. An army flyer circled close and held up one finger. They knew they had won.

"The Aloha had trouble. Three times she went into dangerous tail spins and three times pilot Jensen, stunt flyer, pulled her out. Once, flying low because only close to the sea would their compass work, they bumped a wave; and rose above it. Once the gas pump went wrong. Having no radio for bearings, three hours were wasted shooting the sun. With gas left for a half hour's flying they landed after 28 hours and 5 minutes; nearly two hours behind Goebel. Of the Miss Doran and the Golden Eagle no news. They were last sighted passing the Farallon Islands, 30 miles off San Francisco. They struck the water somewhere between the Farallons and the Hawaiians, almost 2,400 miles beyond.

"Two score naval vessels and 20 merchant ships, navy and army planes combed the Pacific. Flint, Mich., and San Francisco proclaimed public prayer for the lost flyers.

"Two days later arose from the Oakland Field Capt. W. P. Erwin and navigator A. W. Eichwaldt in the Dallas Spirit; the wind rent in her fuselage, which had ruined her chances in the race, had been repaired. They were flying for Hawaii, on a hunt for the Golden Eagle and the Miss Doran. The ship was radio equipped. Messages drifted back:

'Just passing Point Lobos (Golden Gate). Love to Ma.'



'Just saw a rum runner; had a time keeping Ike in.'

"'Tell the gentleman who furnished our lunch it was fine, but we can't find the toothpicks.' 'We went into a tail spin—SOS—delay that. We came out of it but we were sure scared. The lights on the instrument board went out and it was so dark that Bill couldn't see the—we are in a spin —SOS . . .'

"At the time of the fatal spin the Dallas Spirit was about 600 miles from San Francisco. Ships rushed to rescue; found nothing.

"The Dole flight had killed three men (TIME, Aug. 22); one woman and six men were missing. Airmen criticized; said preparations for the flight had been inefficient; intimated that the fatalities could have been prevented. Among the critics: Ernest L. Smith, first civilian flyer to hop to Honolulu; Carl Wolfley, Vice President of the National Aeronautic Association; Floyd Bennett, Flyer Byrd's comrade on the North Pole flight; Charles L. Lawrence, inventor of Wright Whirlwind airplane engine."

In addition to *Time* and all the flying magazines, *The New York Times* issues of August 17-18 provide 13 full-length, front-page columns of coverage for the Dole Race. This link [link was found to be inoperable 9/21/09] leads you to a short British Pathe News motion picture film of the beginning and end of the Dole Race. It shows a couple of the failed takeoffs at Oakland and the arrival of the "Woolaroo" [sic] at Honolulu.

Another hazard of the event was captured in an article from the *Bakersfield Californian* of August 16, 1927, below, courtesy of [Mike Gerow](#). Ernie Smith had preceded Goebel across the Pacific by a few days.

***Bakersfield Californian*, August 16, 1927 (Source: Gerow)**



# Mirages Add to Menace Faced by Hawaii Flyers

**M**IRAGES are one of the many terrors that the Pacific holds in store for the Dole race flyers who are crashing their way through the air to Hawaii, according to Morris Smith of Bakersfield, brother of Ernest Smith, the first civilian to fly to the islands.

"I met him when he came back to San Francisco, and he told some wild tales of ocean mirages," Morris says, telling of his first talk with Ernie after he returned.

"Ernie said that he would be flying along in the late afternoon and early morning and suddenly spot a level, green landing field ahead or to one side.

"One time a big haystack loomed into view. Then it vanished in thin air.

"As he flew along he alternately saw cities and stretches of country

forested heavily with large trees. And again he spotted mosques and buildings that would invite investigation. At times he saw islands that appeared inviting and at the same time aroused suspicion as to whether or not he had strayed off his course. He had to keep going."

One of the last words of advice Ernest Smith had for the Hawaiian racers today, according to his brother, was for the pilots to take along plenty of spare goggles.

"Ernie lost his just outside the Golden Gate, and he had to finish the trip without eye protection other than the somewhat inefficient windshield that was open directly over his head. He told me that after he landed he felt that his eyes were sticking out a foot from his head. He was tired, too, mighty tired," Morris said.

The loss of life during this one event caused a major stir in the aviation community and among the public. There was considerable finger-pointing at James Dole with accusations of self-serving greed; at the pilots for not being prepared; to the federal Bureau of Air Commerce for not enforcing aircraft safety measures thoroughly enough. The "blame" was passed, with no one taking the responsibility. Some things never change. This [PDF file](#) (440KB) summarizes the circumstances around the Dole Race as compiled from contemporary writings.

That summary, and the reference in the left sidebar, are fairly clear that there is no blame. This was a race with a good deal of precedent, skill and technology applied to it. The pilots and their passengers were all adults; nobody forced them to participate in the event. *Caveat competitor*. A book written by your Webmaster about the Dole Race, which balances the roles of Goebel and Davis, is here: "[Winners' Viewpoints: The Great 1927 Trans-Pacific Dole Race](#)".

Below, courtesy of the San Diego Aerospace Museum Flickr Stream (SDAM) is a photograph of Goebel among a group of at least 21 female pilots. The date, location and event are unidentified. The pose might commemorate Goebel's trans-Pacific flight, or perhaps a women's flying event.



**Art Goebel and Female Aviators (Source: SDAM)**



The woman in the fur appears to be [Margaret Cooper Perry](#); in the back row, far right looks like May Haizlip. The one kneeling far right appears to be [Aline Miller](#). Fourth from the right is [Bobbie Trout](#). If you can identify any of the others, please let me [KNOW](#).

*Apropos* navigator Davis, the postal cachet, below, courtesy of site visitor Jeff Staines, was signed by Davis ca. 1933. It was not mailed; therefore not postmarked.

**William V. Davis, Jr., Postal Card Cachet, Ca. 1933 (Source: Staines)**





Mr. Staines says about his cachet, "This is a photo postcard of the famous Dornier DO-X aircraft dated 1933. It is signed by Lt. William V. Davis Jr. and is addressed to Arthur Flury in Switzerland. Among his other attributes, Flury compiled and published many transoceanic flight charts over the years. This may be the tie-in between Navigator Davis and Flury on this particular item. The card is stamped but was never postmarked. Maybe it was handed to Flury by Davis himself, or maybe it was sent to him along with other mail in a larger package. I also have never found the reason why Davis would autograph a Dornier photo. This postcard has been a mystery to me for a few years now." Does anyone KNOW the context of this exchange? Below, the address side of the postcard.

**William V. Davis, Jr., Postal Card Cachet, Ca. 1933 (Source: Staines)**





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The only image I have of Goebel with one of the airplanes he brought to Tucson is the one below of him taken May 9, 1932 with Waco ATO [NX9580](#). He flew this airplane to Tucson about three years earlier, on October 29, 1929, when it was registered as "NC".



**Art Goebel With Waco NX9580, 1932**



Although it is not identifiable by number, chances are high that the airplane in the photograph below, also taken at Randolph Field on May 9, 1932, is NX9580. The forward swoop of the fuselage paint scheme is an indicator. The photograph is from the [University of North Texas Portal to Texas History](#) (UNT) at the link.

**Art Goebel (L) and Unidentified Gentleman, May 9, 1932, Randolph Field (Source: UNT via Woodling)**



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Born October 19, 1895, he died December 3, 1973. Art Goebel led a full aviation life (obit right). He has a good Web presence, with this [link](#) being one of the nicer sketches with additional images and links.

This link [link was found to be inoperable 9/21/09] gets you a moving picture clip of Goebel and the Lockheed Vega "Yankee Doodle" (NX4769, not a Register airplane) at the end of one of his record flights. The "Yankee Doodle" was later destroyed in a [crash](#) during another record attempt. Goebel was not on board.

This [link](#) takes you to another photograph of Goebel taken May 9, 1932 at Randolph Field, TX. Compare it with the one above. From the paint pattern, the airplane in the background of both photos looks the same; Goebel took off his jacket in the photo above. Does anyone [RECOGNIZE](#) the gentleman on the right in the photo at the link?

**WASH. POST**  
**Arthur C. Goebel, 78,**  
**Set Aviation Records**  
**GLENDAL, Calif., Dec. 7**  
(UPI)—Pioneer aviator Arthur C. Goebel, who held a number of flying records in the 1920s and '30s, died Monday at the Veterans Hospital in West Los Angeles. He was 78.  
In 1927, Mr. Goebel set a record flying from San Francisco to Honolulu in 26 hours. The following year, he crossed the United States in a record 18 hours.  
He was a veteran of both World War I and II.  
**DEC. 8 1973**

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**Update of 09/04/10** Sorrowfully, I announce the passing on August 25, 2010 of our friend William V. Davis, III. His father was navigator/co-pilot with Register pilot Art Goebel during the Dole Race of August, 1927. I will miss Bill's friendship and kind attention, and his help to bring balance to the story of the Dole Race.

**Goebel Called to WWII Duty,  
*Flying Magazine*, August, 1942**



## Art Goebel in Service



Major Goebel

**N**OW that Maj. Art Goebel has reported for duty at Midland, Tex., Army Flying School, the world's largest bombardier college, hopes are soaring high in the budding "Hell from Heaven" men who are being groomed for Uncle Sam's all-out aerial offensive against the Axis.

Major Goebel probably knows as much about flying the Pacific as any man in the world and is especially familiar with the air around Japan—and Japan is where the bombardiers expect to get in some telling blows in the not-too-distant future.

"Why, I'll bet he even knows where 'Shangri-La' is," one of the bombardier cadets said. If the former speed flyer does know the location of the mythical base from which his old friend Brig. Gen. James H. "Jimmy" Doolittle led the first raids on Tokyo, he isn't telling. But he is ready and willing to impart all of the information at his command to the youngsters who now are mastering the bombsight in anticipation of combat operations over the far reaches of the Pacific.

Winner of the DFC and holder of many cross-country and transoceanic flight records, Major Goebel first hit the headlines in 1927, when he won the famous Dole Derby from San Francisco to Honolulu. He later made an aerial tour of Japan. The bombardier boys are glad to have him and their unanimous opinion seems to be "gosh, what a 'chauffeur' that fellow would make from Shangri-La to Tokyo!"

Bill wrote the warm and informative Foreword for our book (see the left sidebar) ["Winners' Viewpoints: The Great 1927 Trans-Pacific Dole Race."](#) His father and Goebel were the victors in that event. In addition to his Foreword, Bill and his family shared many personal photographs and documents that are published in the book, and that appear elsewhere on this Web site.

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This article, left, appeared in *Flying* magazine, August, 1942, less than a year into WWII. Goebel was again in the Army, assigned to the Army flying school at Midland, TX.

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07/19/07, 09/29/07, 10/08/07, 02/20/08, 01/22/09,  
07/02/09, 09/21/09, 11/02/09, 04/06/11, 07/08/11,  
01/21/14, 07/16/14, 12/01/14, 12/03/14

[http://dmairfield.com/people/goebel\\_ac/](http://dmairfield.com/people/goebel_ac/)



# **ARTHUR C. GOEBEL**

## **1895-1973**



**ART GOEBEL**

Photo Courtesy  
CONOPHILLIPS Corporate Archives



**Col. Art Goebel**

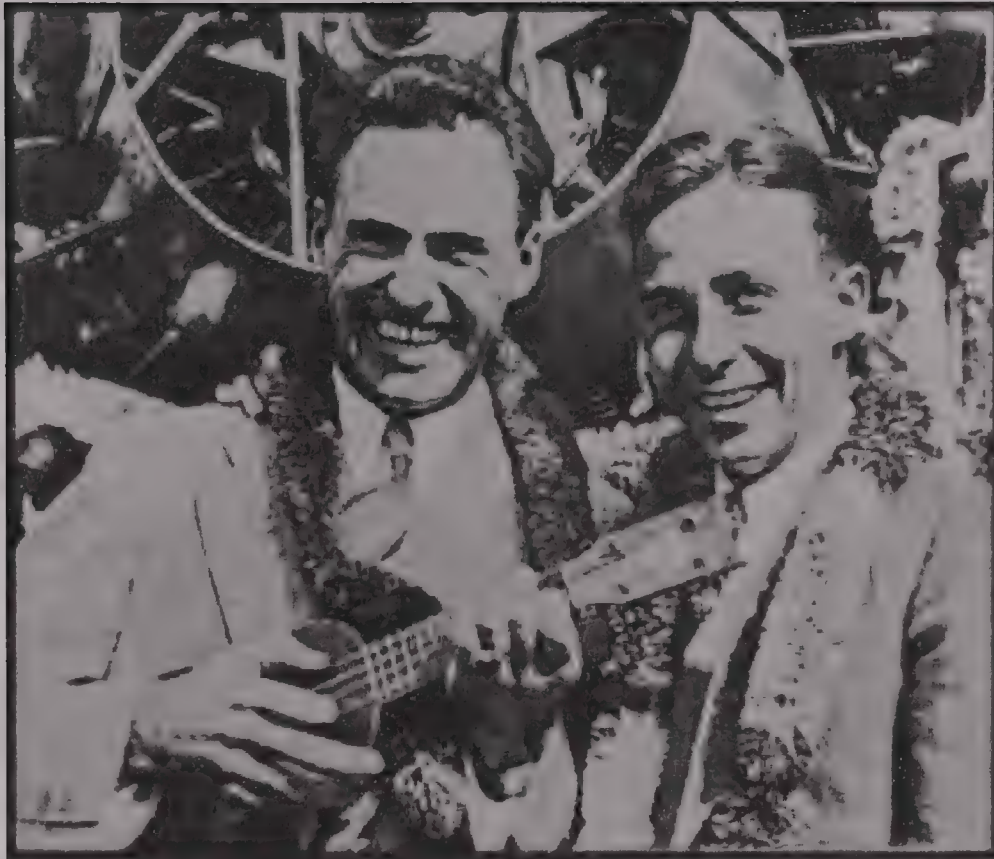
Photo Courtesy  
CONOPHILLIPS Corporate Archives





**Col. Art Goebel**  
**Phillips 66**  
**Skywriter**  
Photo Courtesy  
**CONOPHILLIPS Corporate Archives**





**Winners of the Dole Race in 1927  
Col. Arthur C. Goebel & Lieutenant William V. Davis  
Jr.,**

**Pilot and navigator of the Woolaroc**

**Photo Courtesy**

**CONOPHILLIPS Corporate Archives**

**Pioneer Pacific Fliers wrote Tragic Chapter In Air  
History**

**By JANE ESHLEMAN CONANT**

**Call-Bulletin Staff Writer**

**It was foggy on Tuesday morning, August 16, 1927. The mist shrouded Oakland Airport, drifting close above eight little airplanes lined up in a semicircle at the head of the dusty runway. Fifteen men and a girl were busy about their rickety craft, attending to last minute details, adjusting balky engines and tightening flimsy control wires. A crowd of 75,000 to 100,000 persons clustered along the wooden fences, the chill breeze failing to dampen their eager excitement.**





**Col. Arthur C. Goebel & WOOLAROC, 1927**

Photo Courtesy  
CONOPHILLIPS Corporate Archives

The Woolaroc was piloted by Art Goebel, 31, a big and handsome World War I flier had belonged to the "Thirteen Black Cats of Hollywood," movie stunt fliers who charged \$80 for a parachute jump and \$15,000 for blowing up a ship in mid-air. His navigator was Lieutenant William V. Davis Jr., an Annapolis man. (Continued)

Editor's Note: To read the rest of this comprehensive story of the Dole Race on the website of the Museum of the City of San Francisco, Just click on:

[Dole Race.](#)





Picture above shows five of the well-known flyers who took part in the services as close friends of Roy Knabenshue. They are (left to right) EB Col. Warren Eaton, EB Charles Willard, Col. Art Goebel, Ex Sheriff of Los Angeles County Eugene Biscailuz, and Vince Barnett.

From The Early Birds of Aviation CHIRP, June, 1960, Number 63.

#### **ART GOEBEL ATTENDS KNABENSHUE FUNERAL**

Roy Knabenshue, born July 15, 1876 at Lancaster, Ohio, passed away March 6, 1960 in the Evergreen Sanitarium, Temple City, California. Roy had been in ill health for more than ten years. Two years ago he had a stroke and suffered his second one at his trailer park home in Arcadia, California on February 21, 1960.

Interment and services were held March 9, 1960 at the [Portal of the Folded Wings](#), Valhalla Memorial Park at North Hollywood, California. Twelve Early Birds and some wives attended. EB's present were [Matilde Moisant](#), [Edmond Bates](#), [Tom Hamilton](#), [Charles Willard](#), [George Prudden](#), [Warren Eaton](#), [P. H. Spencer](#), [Ralph Carter](#), [Tiny Broadwick](#), [Horace Keene](#), [George Barnhart](#) and [Ivan P. Wheaton](#).

Mrs. Walter Brookins, wife of deceased Early Bird [Walter Brookins](#) who is also interred here, attended. A large number of OX-5's and Quiet Birdmen attended and about twenty of their members with six Early Birds were honorary pallbearers. Many famous pilots and persons were on hand, to name a few: Col. Art Goebel, winner of the first race to Honolulu; [Jimmy Mattern](#), famous for his early round-the-world attempts; Jimmy James, one of the oldest transport and mail pilots; ex-sheriff of Los Angeles County Eugene Biscailuz, who started the first sheriff's aero squadron; Vince Barnett, movie comedian and World War I pilot; and Dot Lemon, early speed pilot.



**From The Early Birds of Aviation CHIRP, June, 1960, Number 63.**

## **ONLINE RESOURCES**

**By using the Google search engine, (1-21-04), on "Art Goebel +aviation," you will find some 167 links. Among those which you will want to visit are several of Phillips 66 Aviation. For a brief history of Phillip's pioneering highlights in aviation, I highly recommend that you visit:**

**[Phillips 66 Aviation](#)**

**While there, I think you will enjoy the twelve photographs which are found on:**

**[Aviation Page.](#)**

## **1927 DOLE AIR RACE TO HAWAII**

*On August 16, 1927, eight of the fifteen aircraft that were competing for the \$25,000 first prize and the \$10,000 second prize offered by James Dole, of the Dole Pineapple Company, left Oakland, California, for Honolulu, Hawaii, about 2,400 miles away, and across the Pacific Ocean.*

**Roy Nagl has compiled a website which contains a listing of all of the entrants, with some photos which are from the original vintage prints and may have been taken just before the start of the Dole Air Race. Roy has included many explanatory notes which will help you to understand the race, the planes and the aviators. In addition, the site lists a number of important links to other sites of interest. I heartily recommend that you visit this site by clicking on the title above.**

## **LOCKHEED VEGA "YANKEE DOODLE"**

**Flown by Art Goebel**

**Roy Nagle has just posted this new website on the net. (1-20-04). On it you will find the stories of the Transcontinental Flights of both Art Goebel and Charles Collyer. The stories are illustrated with many unique photographs. You can access the site by clicking on the title above.**

# In Memoriam

**According to Art Goebel's Death Certificate, He died on 12/3/73 at 1:10 PM at the VA Wadsworth Hospital Center in Los Angeles, CA. He was buried on 12/8/73 at the Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, CA.**

**Courtesy CONOPHILLIPS Corporate Archives**

**<http://earlyaviators.com/egoebel.htm>**





# Arthur Goebel Jr.: Forgotten Golden Age Daredevil

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6/12/2006 • [Aviation History](#), [Personalities](#)

Remember Arthur Goebel Jr., contemporary of the Wright brothers and Charles Lindbergh, stunt pilot extraordinaire? Like many, I had never even heard of Goebel until a series of seemingly unrelated events first brought this pioneering pilot to my attention four decades ago. Since then, I've gained a new appreciation for the challenges and perils of Golden Age fliers.

One evening in 1965, as I was grading historical essays at home, the telephone rang. After answering it, my wife yelled: 'You'd better come quick. There's an angry man on the phone demanding to speak to you.' When I identified myself, a gruff voice said, 'You published a picture of my father's store, and I want to talk to you about it.' Arthur Goebel Jr. told me that he was staying at a local motel and wanted to see me posthaste. Thus began an unusual friendship.

It happened that one of the many old photographs I had included in a Socorro County, N.M., Historical Society publication showed a Fourth of July parade on the Socorro plaza in 1884. In the background was a building with a sign advertising the Goebel Mercantile Company, Arthur Goebel Proprietor. The rest of that evening I spent with Art, talking about that photo and many others I had collected, as well as his father's contribution to the history of old Socorro and Belen, N.M.

In the years following that first conversation, Goebel stopped by to visit me on several occasions while traveling from Los Angeles to Llano, Texas, where he owned a small ranch. I learned that he had been born on October 19, 1895, and had spent his early youth in New Mexico. His father, a German immigrant, had tried his luck in several mining camps in Colorado before moving to Socorro and opening a store in 1880. He later moved his family to Belen, where Arthur Jr. was born, then back to Colorado and finally to Los Angeles.

It was some time before I learned anything about his flying career. One day he casually mentioned that in 1927 he had won the Dole Race from Oakland to Honolulu. He also divulged that he had worked as a barnstormer. But I sensed that his memories of those early days in the air were less than happy. In 1968 he finally gave me some photos documenting his flying escapades. They included several that depicted the Dole Race, as well as others that related to the early days of aviation in Hollywood.



It was in Southern California that Art Goebel Jr. became involved in flying. Having served with the Allied ground forces during World War I, where he got an occasional glimpse of American pilots dueling with German fliers in the skies over Europe, he returned to Los Angeles after the November 11, 1918, armistice, determined to take flying lessons. He became a familiar figure at local airports — Rogers Field, on Wilshire Boulevard, and Glove Field — joining the throng of other young men and women eager to get into the new field of aviation.

The planes that were available for those brand-new aviators to fly were pretty primitive, and at first there were limited job opportunities for those bold enough to risk their necks in the early flying contraptions. A few lucky fliers managed to land paying positions with the U.S. Postal Service in its fledgling airmail program. Most, however, eked out a living barnstorming around the country. They routinely played one-night stands, also participating in races that offered money prizes, giving flying lessons, selling members of their audiences rides — if their planes had room for more than one person in the cockpit — and doing a variety of stunts at what they called ‘air meets.’

Aside from working for the Postal Service, Goebel tried most of those jobs. He was tall and good-looking, the picture-perfect swashbuckling pilot, so he fit in well in Hollywood, where he found a variety of stunting jobs. But he was also on the lookout for other opportunities to put his newly developed flying skills to the test in something other than stunt flying. Early in 1920, a threatened war between Chile and Peru attracted his attention. Goebel flew to South America, hoping to become a soldier of fortune. Disappointed when a conflict failed to develop, he took a job in Lima and also taught flying. He remained there for 14 months before returning to Los Angeles in 1921.

Goebel quickly earned a sterling reputation as a movie pilot. By 1924, he was known as the ace of Pacific Coast stunt fliers, especially celebrated for his prowess in flying upside-down. He did seemingly every trick that could be done with an airplane at the time. He carried wing-walkers such as Gladys Ingle and Ivan Unger, who wowed crowds with thrilling plane changes. He also performed hair-raising tricks such as diving under Pasadena’s Colorado Street Bridge while women were standing on the top wing of his biplane. As one reporter put it, Goebel was ‘known to every director and actor for his breathtaking stunts before a camera.’ His jaunty pilot’s garb might well have served as the pattern for the costumes worn by movie fliers of his day.

Goebel may also have been a member, perhaps even a founding member, of an unusual organization known as the 13 Black Cats (sources disagree on his involvement). This was a group of pilots who specialized in stunt flying, parachute jumping, wing-walking and other aerial acrobatics in the early days of Hollywood aviation. The group apparently never numbered more than 13 members, and it included women as well as men. In addition to appearing in films, the Black Cats would perform their crazy stunts for anyone — for a price. For example, at one point they reportedly charged \$500 for an upside-down plane change (the stuntman would transfer from a plane flying upside down to one flying right side up), \$200 for an automobile to plane change, \$1,200 to crash an aircraft into a tree or house, and \$1,500 to blow up an aircraft they were piloting, then parachute to the ground.

There were plenty of flying contests for ambitious stuntmen and women to participate in during the 1920s and '30s. For example, at the Elks' annual air meet at La Brea, Calif., in April 1936, Goebel was the hero of the day. He finished first in a 'Jenny' Scramble, first in an upside-down flying event and second in the day's final race over a measured course.

In 1924 and '26, Goebel returned to South America and barnstormed across much of the continent. He also taught flying and did stunts for the crowds of curious locals who showed up to watch his daredevil antics. Later in life, he would return to South America and travel extensively. Some of the photos he passed on to me show scenes from those trips.

By the summer of 1927, Goebel was ready for a new challenge when he heard about an air race from Oakland, Calif., to Hickam Field in Honolulu, then being organized by James J. Dole of the Dole Pineapple Company. The contest — inspired by Charles Lindbergh's successful transatlantic flight in May of that year — was scheduled for August, with first-place prize money set at \$25,000. This was just what Goebel was looking for. The race offered him a chance to do something noteworthy and at the same time make a substantial amount of money. He apparently had no doubt that he would win.

Up to that time, there had been only two Pacific crossing flights, both of which had been sponsored by the military. In September 1925, a U.S. Naval Aircraft Factory PN-9 flying boat piloted by Commander John P. Rodgers made it to within 55 miles of the Hawaiian Islands (a world record for seaplanes) before experiencing engine trouble. In June 1927, U.S. Army Air Corps Lieutenants Lester J. Maitland and Albert F. Hegenberger flew all the way to Honolulu in the Fokker Trimotor *Bird of Paradise*.

Now that civilian pilots were lining up to try for a Pacific crossing, the American press jumped on the story. For weeks before the projected takeoff date, the newspapers covered every possible aspect of the contest, touting it as the greatest sporting event of the century.

The preparations for the race were extensive. All pilots were required to have a navigator. Pilots as well as navigators were given navigation tests, and the planes had to be checked out by mechanics in order to qualify for the overwater flight. Fuel tests were run over measured distances, in an effort to accurately determine how much would be required by each plane. Then each competitor had to add additional fuel tanks to the standard ones so that each aircraft could carry 15 percent more gas than was estimated as needed for the trip.

Each plane was also required to be equipped with an air-to-ground radio. The aircraft piloted by Goebel and navigator Bill Davis, a Travel Air monoplane, carried a 50-watt radio with a wavelength of 608 meters. For each aircraft that made it into the race, an estimated \$500 had to be spent on preparations. That expense was in addition to the acquisition cost for the aircraft and the cost of getting plane and crew to Oakland.

Although he had been the first pilot to sign up for the race, Goebel was the last to arrive in Oakland and the last to qualify for the race, due to difficulties in securing financial support for his attempt. He had ordered the Travel Air, which was constructed in Wichita, Kan., without knowing exactly where the money would come from to pay for it. At the last moment he located



an additional sponsor who would become a lifelong friend — Frank Phillips, president of Phillips Petroleum Company — who loaned him the \$4,500 needed to take delivery of the plane. Goebel agreed to name the plane *Woolaroc* after Phillips' Oklahoma estate (also the name of an Osage Indian chief). In addition, Goebel agreed to use a new aviation fuel developed by Phillips.

On August 14, 1927, 11 aircraft were qualified for the race. Their fuel requirements had been tested and auxiliary tanks installed. The navigators had honed their skills for the challenge, and all seemed ready. However, the weather refused to cooperate, which resulted in the takeoff being delayed for two days. By the 16th, conditions had improved somewhat, and nine of the aircraft were lined up, ready to take off one at a time.

The weather was still pretty bad — leaden skies, a low ceiling and fog all seemed likely to make flying risky. The planes were heavily laden with extra fuel, and wet, muddy field conditions made their takeoff doubly difficult.

Two of the racers did not even attempt to take off, reducing the field further. Two other planes did not make it off the ground due to the excess weight they were carrying and the muddy conditions. One plane experienced engine trouble within a few miles of takeoff, forcing its crew to Oakland for hurried repairs before returning to the contest. Three of the aircraft disappeared over the Pacific. The radio equipment installed on the planes was primitive and unreliable, and no messages were ever heard from the lost crews. Moreover, the weather was so bad that crews of ships stationed along the route of the race never saw any of the planes. All efforts to find the lost racers would prove unsuccessful.

Only two of the planes made it to Honolulu — Goebel and Davis in *Woolaroc*, arriving 27 hours, 17 minutes and 33 seconds after taking off, and Martin Jensen and his navigator Paul Schluter in the Breese monoplane *Aloha*, who arrived two hours later.

For *Woolaroc*'s crew, the 2,439-mile flight had been anything but easy or comfortable. The auxiliary gas tanks had been placed inside the cabin, between the pilot and the navigator. They could neither see nor hear each other, and radio contact between them was impossible, since the radio was only supposed to be capable of contacting stations on the ships spaced along the route — but it didn't work well at that, either. The two crewmen ended up passing each other notes back and forth along a line strung over the fuel tank. Goebel later gave me a photograph of one of the notes, the only one to survive the trip. He explained that just as he had passed a note requesting their arrival time to Davis, he caught sight of Hawaii's mountains. Since the note needed no answer, Davis discarded it through a vent. By chance, the note caught on one of the tail struts, where it was recovered on the ground. Goebel recorded how the note was preserved on the photo itself.

Although Goebel had triumphed and won \$25,000, the worldwide recognition he had expected to garner from the race never materialized. In all, 10 people died in the course of the contest, clouding the public's perception of the event. The search for the lost planes lasted several weeks and riveted the attention of the media and the public. The race was generally regarded as a disaster. Goebel's momentary notoriety was quickly eclipsed by the bad press the affair received, leaving the pilot bitter about its outcome for the rest of his life.

Goebel repaid his sponsors for their contributions to the effort, then gave half of the remaining money to his navigator and bought a new aircraft with the rest. He returned to flying stunts in the movies, and even achieved the rare distinction — for a stuntman — of getting a role and a screen credit in *The Air Patrol* and *Won in the Clouds*, both released in 1928.

Also during 1928, however, he embarked on what would be his most outstanding year as a record-setting flier. Not content merely to wow crowds with aerial tricks, he undertook the role of aviation advocate. ‘I am an aviation preacher,’ he declared, ‘and I am going to broadcast the possibilities of the air to everyone I meet. It is the greatest thing of the age. We can’t begin to realize how great it is going to become. The first thing you know we will be stepping into planes and flying around the world.’

In March 1928, he set out on a goodwill tour of Japan, accompanied by Ernest Robertson of the Fairchild Aviation Company. Flying a Fairchild monoplane, they began a well-publicized trek from Curtis Field on Long Island, stopping in Washington, D.C., Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas and Los Angeles. At each stop they demonstrated the aircraft and gave interviews. After sailing to Tokyo, they barnstormed around Japan, giving rides, performing stunts and selling the Japanese on the idea of flying. In an interview with *The New York Times* after their return to the United States in June 1928, Goebel noted, ‘The Japanese are somewhat skeptical about flying due to the number of crashes, yet they have developed excellent airfields.’

In August 1928, Goebel and Harry J. Tucker made the first nonstop crossing of the United States from west to east, flying a Lockheed Vega 5 monoplane dubbed *Yankee Doodle*. The Vega, which had not been modified for the flight, had a cruising speed of 135 mph, with a top speed of 170. Taking off from Mines Field in Los Angeles and landing at Curtis Field on Long Island, they averaged 142 mph. The extra fuel they needed to complete the long flight was carried in 5-gallon cans, then hand-pumped by Tucker into the main fuel tank as they needed it. Goebel and Tucker were met on arrival by Aero Digest publisher Frank Tichenor. After they landed, Goebel reportedly greeted Tichenor with ‘Good morning, Frank. It’s 7:04. I reckon we are 18 hours and 58 minutes from Los Angeles, and it’s about time for breakfast.’ On August 24, Tucker became the first person to fly round-trip across the continent. He returned to the West Coast in *Yankee Doodle* with a different pilot, Charles Collyer.

Goebel traveled widely to participate in races, hoping to garner additional prize money. Some races he flew in *Yankee Doodle*, while others he flew in *Woolaroc*, sponsored by Phillips. On September 14, 1928, Goebel and Frank Tucker of Lockheed entered a nonstop race from Long Island to Los Angeles. Due to incorrect estimates of the fuel needed, they were forced to land in Arizona. Although they were the only participants to finish the race, they were disqualified because they had not made the trip nonstop.

A few days after that disappointment, Goebel and Tucker entered *Yankee Doodle* in a nonstop race from Los Angeles to Cincinnati, Ohio. They won the contest in 15 hours, 17 minutes, taking \$3,000 in prize money. Goebel commented, ‘We ran into severe weather over Arizona and New Mexico, but since the Dole Race, severe weather has had little terror for me.’



September 1929 saw Goebel in Mexico City, the only American entrant in a race from there to Kansas City, Mo. Most of the other participants were members of the Mexican Army Air Force. There were several control points where the racers had to land. The winner would be determined by total elapsed time in the air. Storms forced all the racers but Goebel to land short of the first control point, and the race was nearly called off. Finally the racers were reassembled at the first checkpoint and the race continued. The bad weather continued, but Goebel's experience and skill led to another victory. He beat one of the Mexican pilots to Kansas City by only two minutes, winning \$3,000.

In 1931 he flew a Lockheed design in the Bendix Trophy race from Los Angeles to Cleveland, Ohio, completing the flight in 11 hours, 55 minutes and 48 seconds, at an average speed of 171.5 mph. He placed fifth, the winner of the \$7,500 first prize being James H. Doolittle in his Laird Super Solution, going the distance in 9 hours, 10 minutes and 21 seconds at an average of 233.058 mph.

During the 1930s Goebel entered the U.S. Army Air Corps Reserves and rose to the rank of colonel. He served as a pilot during World War II in the Pacific theater. In 1941 he married Ann Jergens, heir to the Jergens cosmetics empire. But their marriage lasted only six years; they were divorced in 1947, and Goebel never remarried. Arthur Goebel Jr. died in Los Angeles on December 3, 1973. By the time his life ended, he had seen his prophecies about how aviation would change the world come true. People indeed did travel round the world in airplanes.

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This article was written by Paige W. Christianse and originally published in the March 2006 issue of *Aviation History* magazine. For more great articles subscribe to [Aviation History](http://www.historynet.com/aviation-history) magazine today!

<http://www.historynet.com/arthur-goebel-jr-forgotten-golden-age-daredevil.htm>

## Capsule Biographies

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### IVAN GATES

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### LEE GEHLBACH

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### ART GOEBEL

Born at Belen, NM, October 19, 1983. Died at Los Angeles December 3, 1973.



Arthur C Goebel was often erroneously credited as a fighter pilot in WW1, but served in the Allied ground forces in France, where he became inspired by the planes circling above. After the war, he learned to fly and barnstormed to eke out a living, then went to South America in 1920 to try his hand as soldier of fortune but found no takers there, so ended up a flight instructor in Lima, Peru. Returning to the USA in 1921, he finally found his calling in Los Angeles as a member of the original legendary "13 Black Cats" aerial performers that made a good living as stunt flyers for motion pictures.

As well, he also became a record-setting pilot in some memorable adventures.

In a year filled with aviation records, Geobel won initial fame in winning the 1927 Oakland-Honolulu [Dole Air Race](#). On Aug 16, he and his navigator, USN Lt William V Davis Jr, began the then perilous 2,437-mile journey over the Pacific Ocean in just over 26 hours in his Phillips Petroleum-sponsored Travel Air *Woolaroc* as first of only two planes to complete the trip.

In early 1928 he set out on a goodwill tour of Japan with Ernest Robertson of the Fairchild Aviation Co, barnstorming around that nation, giving rides, performing, and selling the Japanese on the idea of flying. Back into racing, Goebel placed first in the first transcontinental non-stop Air Derby from New York to Los Angeles, on Sept 13, 1928, with navigator Harry Tucker in Lockheed Vega 5 *Yankee Doodle*. He was also a



major competitor at the Natl Air Races into the early '30s, and was the only American in the 1928 Mexico City-Kansas City Air Race, which he also won.

☐ He owed his title of "Colonel" to George L Miller, a well-known Oklahoma oilman and rancher. On tour with *Woolaroc* after the Dole Race, Goebel landed at Ponca City and met Miller, took him on several flights about the state. "If Lindbergh has a military title," an impressed Miller remarked, "Why should not he have one, too?" Miller and Oklahoma City news publisher Walter Harrison suggested to the Governor he make Goebel a colonel on his military staff—the idea was accepted, and Goebel was so designated. During the 1930s, in addition to operating his own flight school, Goebel joined the Army Air Corps Reserves, then served in the AAF (reportedly as pilot, which is doubtful given his age at the time) during WW2 in the Pacific. His autobiography was published in 1929, and updated by G W Hyatt in 2007.

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## GRANVILLE BROTHERS

☐  
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## LOU GREVE

☐ Born at Cleveland OH, November 2, 1882. Died February 2, 1942.

☐ In 1900 Louis William Greve, prolific inventor, aviation pioneer, industrialist, and civic leader, began as an office boy in his father's company, Cleveland Pneumatic Tool, and learned the pneumatic device field from bottom to top, succeeding his father as president.

☐ He submitted the first of his 46 patents in 1903. His first patent was awarded in 1904 for an impact tool design now widely known as the jack hammer. Other personal patents included shock absorbers for early automobiles (air springs) and for aircraft, one of which was manufactured as the Aerol Strut, the first oleo-pneumatic shock absorbing strut for aircraft. In 1927, Greve sat on a plank attached to the bracing struts of a taxiing plane to take motion pictures of the action of the first experimental set of Aerol Struts, which made take-offs and landings by military airplanes smoother and safer on the limited, unsteady deck space of carrier and became standardized for all sectors of aviation.

☐ In 1929, Greve was named president of the National Air Races and vice president of the Cleveland National Air Race & Show Corporation, two non-profit organizations set up to conduct the business details of the field events and exposition. He had played a major role in securing the two consecutive five-year contracts for the races through the National Aeronautics Association, and would hold the title of president of both Cleveland National Air Race organizations from 1930 through 1939. Other aviation titles included president of the Cleveland Chapter of the National Aeronautics Association and chairman and president of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce Committee on

## Aviation.

▣ A firm believer that increased participation by women in aeronautics was vital to aviation's progress and public acceptance, he established the Cleveland Pneumatic Tool's Aerol Trophy Race for women pilots in 1929, from Santa Monica to Cleveland. In 1930 the derby began at Long Beach and ended at Chicago. Today it is popularly known as the Women's Air Derby, and the victor is still awarded the Aerol Trophy. At the 1931 races it was established as a perpetual classic free-for-all closed-course race for women.

▣ In 1934, he also sponsored the \$25,000 Louis W Greve Trophy Race, a high-speed closed-course event open to both men and women. In it planes were required to have a 550 cubic-inch or less engine displacement, a restriction implemented to encourage greater speed and efficiency in the lower-power airplane groups.

▣ On Greve's death, Major John Berry, with whom he worked closely in conducting the NARs said, "He was one of the most vital factors in the development of aviation. Cleveland and aviation owe a great deal to Mr Lou Greve." (— *Betsy Kidd*)

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## ROY GRUMMAN

▣ Born at Huntington NY, January 4, 1895. Died October 4, 1982.

▣ Leroy Randle Grumman founded Grumman Corporation in December 1929 with William T Schwendler and Leon A Swirbul as a repair shop for Loening amphibians.

▣ During his lengthy career, Grumman was awarded both Presidential Medal of Merit and the Guggenheim Medal in 1948, became the first recipient of the National Academy of Science's Hunsacker Medal in 1968 for his contributions to aeronautical engineering, and was enshrined in the Aviation Hall of fame. An honorary Doctorate of Engineering came from Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn in 1949, and a Doctorate of Laws from Adelphi University in 1961.

▣ Grumman retired from presidency of the corporation in 1966, remaining as a director until 1972, at which time he retired in full, but was elected as honorary lifetime chairman of the board. He died in 1982 after a long illness.

▣ Enshrined in [National Aviation Hall of Fame](#) 1972. ▣

▣ SEE ALSO [The Grumman Story](#).

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## DANIEL & HARRY GUGGENHEIM

▣ Daniel: born at Philadelphia PA, 1856. Died September 28, 1930.  
Harry: born 1891. Died January 22, 1971.

▣



A father-son team who, with their philanthropies and personal involvement, affected the course of aviation history to an immeasurable extent. Although the elder, Daniel Guggenheim, died without ever having flown, even as a passenger, his legacy remains active today. Between 1925 and 1930, he put more than \$3.3 million (in 1930s dollars!) into a series of aviation-related initiatives which led to the development of more reliable aircraft engines and instruments, and, perhaps most important, public acceptance of aviation as a safe and fast method of transportation. But Guggenheim was in his 70s in these experimental years, and was happy to leave the actual flying to younger people.

□ Harry Guggenheim, on the other hand, saw service in The Great War as a naval aviator in Europe, and became a staunch advocate of commercial air travel. He convinced his father, wealthy from the family's mining and smelting business, into donating \$500,000 to establish a school of aeronautical engineering at New York University, the first of eight such schools they would ultimately endow.

□ Besides his annual [Guggenheim Medal](#) awards for great achievement in aviation, the elder Guggenheim also set up a fund to promote aviation, including research. One of its more important projects was a town-marking campaign that encouraged communities to paint their names on the roofs of large buildings so that pilots who became lost would be able to establish a landmark. A simple idea, suggested to them by [Charles Lindbergh](#), that had a profound impact on aviation safety, saw 8,000 towns so identified by 1930.

□ Most novel for the time, and producing long-term effects, Daniel in 1927 announced his [Safe Aircraft Competition](#) that led to the development of airplanes that could fly at low speeds without stalling, the main cause of crashes then. Two years after that, he established a flight laboratory at Mitchel Field NY to develop instruments that would enable pilots to fly even when it was too foggy for them to see the ground.

□ Together the Guggenheims established a prototype airline between San Francisco and Los Angeles to show that air travel was safe, fast, and reliable. Although this idea had been tried in 1922 for military needs, it never caught on with the general public, and air travel as such required passengers to share space with mails and cargo. The Guggenheim made money available for aircraft and equipment, and to establish a weather service and radio communications network. Only two operators saw any future in this new idea—Varney Air Lines and Western Air Express—and using new Fokker trimotors, WAE inaugurated scheduled service in May 1928, offering passengers a three-hour flight over a 13-hour train trip. Rather than the experiment ending, it became the matrix of operations for WAE, as well as others to follow. Additionally, the Aviation Weather Service and in-flight communications were born with this plan.

□ Grants and research centers were established in other colleges—typical was the Harvard-Guggenheim Center for Aviation Health and Safety—and the pair even sponsored Lindbergh on a 48-state tour to promote aviation. After his father's death, Harry, who co-founded *Newsday* with his wife in 1940, continued aviation-related philanthropies with sponsorship of rocketry pioneer, Robert Goddard. □

□ Harry Guggenheim enshrined in [National Aviation Hall of Fame](#) 1971. (— *Peter Bergen*)

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**ARTHUR C. GOEBEL**

**Art Goebel, Ca. 1927 (Source: Kalina)**



# CLOVER FIELD

**Santa Monica, CA**

**December 31, 1928 to August 4, 1939**

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**[Winners' Viewpoints: The Great 1927 Trans-Pacific Dole Race](#)**

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**HOME**

**THE REGISTER**



Arthur C. Goebel landed five times at the Davis-Monthan Airfield, and once at Peterson Field, [Colorado Springs, CO](#). Goebel led a full aviation life. He has a good Web presence, and [his biography](#) is at the link to the Davis-Monthan Register Web site. You will find additional photographs and information there, as well as information and links about the Dole Race. He was born October 19, 1895. He died December 3, 1973.

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#### SPONSORED LINKS

THIS PAGE UPLOADED: 06/13/13 REVISED: 12/05/14

[http://cloverfield.org/people/goebel\\_ac/index.php](http://cloverfield.org/people/goebel_ac/index.php)





A third SDAM photograph, below, is rare in that it shows three Register entities captured in one image. Left to right are William McAdoo, owner of Lockheed [NC309H](#), [Henry "Hap" Arnold](#) as a Colonel, and Goebel. The occasion appears to be an air race.

**L-R Aircraft Owner W. McAdoo, Register Pilots Hap Arnold and Arthur Goebel, Date Unknown (Source: SDAM)**



The second photograph from SDAM shows Goebel with two fish that appear to be kingfish or mackerel.

**Art Goebel With Two Mackerel (Source: SDAM)**



Art Goebel signed the Clover Field Register once, on Saturday, July 20, 1929 at 9:20AM. He arrived from Kansas City, MO and identified his destination as Clover Field. He was solo in an unidentified Butler Blackhawk. It is easy to guess that the airplane could be either NC521, which belonged to Goebel, or [NC730K](#) belonging to Clover Register signer [Jim Granger](#), who operated a flight school at Clover Field. NC730K landed in the hands of a different pilot a month later on August 16, 1929.



Goebel learned to fly in 1920 in California. In the late 1920s, he belonged to the "[Thirteen Black Cats of Hollywood](#)," movie stunt fliers. A founding member of the Cats was Clover Register pilot [Burdett Fuller](#).

Goebel's flying skills and detailed preparation for movie scenes led to success and notoriety as his flying career proceeded.

And proceed it did. Goebel made a permanent name for himself in August, 1927 when he and copilot/navigator William V. Davis, Jr. won the Dole Race. The Dole ran from Oakland, CA to Honolulu, T.H. Goebel and Davis covered the 2,400 mile distance in 26 hours, 17 minutes and 33 seconds. They flew in a Travel Air model 6000 transport named "Woolaroc" pictured behind Goebel at right. They won \$25,000 for their efforts. Your Webmaster wrote a book about the Dole Race entitled "Winners' Viewpoints." You can learn more about the book at the link in the left sidebar.

I know little about Goebel's personal life, or what he did for fun. One of his passtimes seemed to be angling. Below, courtesy of the [San Diego Aerospace Museum Flickr Stream](#) (SDAM) are two images of Goebel at leisure. The first one shows him with four unidentified people and a speed boat named Woolaroc III. The date and location are unknown, except the photograph must have been snapped after December, 1933 when Prohibition was repealed (note the cold beer sign).

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**Art Goebel (R), Dated After December, 1933 (Source: SDAM)**

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Arthur Goebel Jr  
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Fig #

its present site.

## Ex-Belen Pilot Boosted City

A former Belen pilot who won the \$25,000 Dole prize in 1927 for the first flight from the mainland to Honolulu was among the chief boosters of early aviation in Albuquerque.

Col. Arthur C. Goebel, now

### One Line Served City in 1920s

Albuquerque's small airport was served by one airline when it opened in the 1920's—Transcontinental Air Transport.

The '30s brought further growth, as TAT merged with Western Air Express to become Transcontinental and Western Air. The event took place Oct. 1, 35 years ago.

The first planes to land here were Ford tri-motors, which were replaced by DC2's and later by DC3's.

In 1937, TWA joined with Albuquerque in a municipal project by advancing money to the city to buy land for a new airport. When it opened, the local airport was one of only four in the country which

living in California, "took every opportunity to recommend Albuquerque as a transcontinental stopping point," remembers Frank Speakman, first local airport manager.

Mr. Speakman described Goebel's 1928 refueling stop in Albuquerque while mapping a route for a proposed air race.

"Goebel arrived in his Travel Air monoplane, named the Woolaroc," Speakman said.

"And at the time the gas pumps were not yet in operation."

"This required that the plane's 450-gallon gas tanks be hand-filled by bucket from gasoline drums," Speakman, author of "Albuquerque Airport," said. "The hangar was not completed and the plane had to be staked down and guarded all night in a drenching downpour."

## By Plane and Train

In Albuquerque's early days as a stop on the coast-to-coast route, both airplanes and trains were involved in the process!

It was on a July day, 1929 that the first scheduled Ford tri-motor belonging to Transcontinental Air Transport landed in Albuquerque, on one

could handle the four-engined planes which were coming.

By 1940, TWA's first four-engined Boeing Stratoliners were operating in Albuquerque.

leg of a journey that took 48 hours from coast-to-coast.

The airlines of those early days had not mastered the requirements of night flying, so the aircraft would land at dusk and the passengers would board railroad sleeping cars for the night portion of their journeys.

At daybreak they would board another plane, and off they'd go. Albuquerque's small airport of the 1930's, one stop on the coast-to-coast route, was nestled on the East Mesa in the sand and sagebrush.

Boyle 2-2-34



# Belen Native Col. Art Goebel Returns



**TAKEOFF!** — Belen born Art Goebel is shown in his plane crossing the starting line located on Bay Farm Island, Oakland, Calif., in his historic flight to Hawaii which Goebel won, along with \$25,000 first prize money and international fame.



**THE WINNER** — Art Goebel, who returned to Belen over the weekend, for a brief visit, is shown above upon his arrival in Honolulu, Hawaii, on Aug. 17, 1928, winning \$25,000 and the James D. Dole flight from California to Hawaii. San Francisco Mayor James Rolph Jr. wired Goebel the following message: "San Francisco joins the world in congratulating you upon the success of your daring enterprise -- the winning of the most thrilling race of human history and the capture of the Dole prize. A hearty welcome awaits you upon your return to this city where you have so many friends."



**1896 PICNIC** in Belen. A large photograph of this picnic group in Belen was among a collection of oldtime Belen pictures given to Mrs. Marion Herlihy by Col. Art Goebel for display in a proposed historical society exhibit in the Hub City. Goebel is shown in the circle in the center, as a baby, held in the lap of his mother. In the circle at the top of the picture, near the flag, is Louis C. Becker, as a boy 73 years ago. Many other prominent citizens of 1895 are shown in the picture.

A native of Belen, who won fame as a flyer and became a world traveler, returned to the Hub City over the weekend, celebrating his 73rd birthday Saturday in the town where he was born in 1895.

Col. Art Goebel, winner of the \$25,000 Dole air race between Oakland, Calif., and Honolulu, Hawaii in 1928 and the first man to fly non-stop across the North American continent, brought a large collection of photographs with him for display in a local museum.

Mrs. Marion Herlihy of Belen, who accepted the collection, disclosed that the local Pilot International club is planning to start an historical society in Belen during the coming year.

The Community Service committee of the club will take the lead in forming the Valencia County chapter of the New Mexico Historical Society, Mrs. Herlihy said. Committee members include Mrs. Mable Emond, chairman; Mrs. Weldon Burris, Mrs. Clarence Campbell, Mrs. Juin Carroll, Mrs. Pat Gibson and Mrs. Herlihy.

It has been a life of challenge for Goebel since he left Belen at the age of 5 years. His career has included historic

air flights and 30 years of military service including active duty in World War I, World War II and the Korean War, and following the sky-riding profession in between. He has traveled around the world four times and plans a fifth trip in the near future.

Member of a prominent Belen family, Art moved with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Louis Arthur Goebel, from Belen to Colorado and on to California. His father first settled in Socorro in 1877. An uncle, Walter Goebel, still lives in San Diego, Calif., leaving Belen a decade ago.

The only oldtimers Goebel found upon his return here were L.C. Becker, president of the First National Bank of Belen, and Jose Dolores Cordova of Jarales.

Where does Goebel call home? Well, it might be California, a ranch at Llano, Texas, or at Celle, Germany, near Hanover. He hasn't visited Belen often, but he did return about 1913-14, again skywriting for the Phillips Oil Co., and occasionally passing through Belen en route from Texas to California.

He says he hardly recognizes his birthplace, the town grows so much or changes its appearance so much be-

tween trips. He was born here in an adobe house near the old Felipe Chavez home, west of Main street from the Caldwell Motor Co. The house is no longer there.

Goebel recalls vividly his non-stop flight from a barley field at Los Angeles to New York City in 1928. The flight took 18 hours and 28 minutes. He had to throttle the engine just right to have enough gasoline to complete the trip. One passenger accompanied him, to pump gas. He was flying a single engine Lockheed.

## NEW X-RAY TECHNICIAN

Paul Gromatzky, X-ray technician at Belen General Hospital, is a native New Mexican and moved to the Los Lunas area from Las Vegas with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Gromatzky, when he was two years old. He attended Los Lunas schools and upon graduation from high school, joined the Navy. He spent two years with the Naval Reserves at Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego, and was stationed at Miramar Naval Air Station during the balance of his enlistment.

He was hospital corpsman, 3rd class and received his X-ray technician training at Miramar Naval Air Station.

Gromatzky is married to the former Barbara Greet of West Virginia. The couple reside in Belen and are the parents of a year old daughter.

A drouth is the worst foe of ducks and geese.



**COL. ART GOEBEL**, right, who was born in Belen, displays a large 1895 picnic scene in Belen during a visit here. Left to right are L.C. Becker, president of the First Nat'l Bank of Belen, and Mrs. Marion C. Herlihy, vice pres.



people  
& places

Clara Garcia

As the Thanksgiving holiday approaches, I keep thinking of what I'm most thankful for. There's a lot to think about.

Yes, I'm thankful for my family, for my health, my job and for my life. But, when I really get down to thinking, there is so much more than just the obvious.

Being thankful for what I have is not enough — I'm grateful and indebted to those in my life who have helped and encouraged me along the way. Without their support, I couldn't have become the person I am today.

Without a doubt, my parents are probably the people who have influenced my life the most. It was with their guidance and their direction that they showed me how to be me.

As I was growing up, my parents were always there for me. They helped me when something was wrong and celebrated with me when things were great.

There are several things in life that I'm sure about, and one of those things is that my mom will always be there for me to talk to. I can't even recall how many hours we've spent sitting at her kitchen table talking.

Talking about her life, talking about my life or just simply talking. It's comforting to know that whenever I just want to talk, she will always have time to share her wisdom with me.

I'm also thankful for my father — my daddy. Every day of my life, my father has been able to put a smile on my face. The way he tells those corny jokes can make me either roll over with laughter or just chuckle, wondering why he thought it was so funny.

If my dad has proven anything, it's that he has been and will always be there for every one of his children. If I need his help, he's always the first one to lend a helping hand — no questions asked.

Then there are my brothers and sisters. When we were growing up, my parents would tell all of us to always be friends because we'd always be there for each other.

As I grew older, I found this to be true. Even though I don't talk with them on a daily basis, my brothers and sisters are and always will be close. Not only do I know that they will forever be in my life, I know that we will always be around to help one another.

But when you ask me what I'm most grateful for, it has to be, without a doubt, my husband, my daughter and my two step-sons. They are the people who never let me down and who I know love me without question.

Yes, as in every family, there are squabbles and misunderstandings. We're not perfect — but whose family is?

My husband — my best friend — has shown me what true friendship and true love are really all about. I am grateful for Matthew's companionship, his humor, his sensitivity and, yes, even those days when he teases me to the point where I can't take it any more. (Just don't tell him I ever said that.)

And then there's my daughter and two step-sons. In a time when we are all afraid of what the future may hold for our children, I know and trust that they will be all right.

Every morning and every night, I thank God for Caitlin, Jonathan and Terrence. Even though they are all so different from one another, their personalities complement what siblings should be — friends.

Being thankful for who is in your life shouldn't be a yearly tradition. Everyone you love should know that you are grateful for them every day.

(Editor's note: Clara Garcia is the daughter of Aveleno and Angie Cano of Belen; sister of Debra Yarnelle and David, Daniel, Emily and Angela Cano; the wife of Matthew Garcia; the mom of Caitlin Cano; and step-mom of Jonathan and Terrence Garcia.)



Art Goebel and his Jenny plane. This photo was courtesy of the Woolaroc Museum of Bartlesville, Okla.

## A life in flight

*In Lindbergh's shadow, a Belen native set off in 1927 in race to be first to fly to Hawaii*

(Editor's note: La Historia del Rio Abajo is written by the Valencia County Historical Society for the News-Bulletin.)

## First of three parts

Daring, flamboyant and suave, Belen native Art Goebel, Jr. lived an adventurous life, mingled with celebrities and served his country in three wars. Winning the Dole Race from California to Hawaii in 1927 marked him as a pioneer of commercial aviation.

Figuratively speaking, Art was the caboose on a train of German immigration that commenced in the middle of the 19th century. It began with Franz Huning.

Franz and his brother Charles left the old country in 1849, landing at New Orleans, La. They traveled up the Mississippi River to St. Louis where they heard reports of a gold discovery in California. Charles accepted a job with a local merchant.

Desire for riches lured Franz westward to Santa Fe. People told him that it was on the way to California. Deep snow interrupted his journey. In the spring, he was employed at a mercantile establishment in Albuquerque.

Diligence and good fortune characterized Franz's life in Albuquerque. He wrote to Charles urging him to come west. Correspondence with family in Germany

enticed a younger brother, Louis, to join them in 1858. Louis took a wagon full of Franz's goods down the Rio Grande valley to Los Lunas. He opened a store that turned good profit.

Oscar Goebel was born in Hanover, Germany. He was inducted into the army for the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71). Oscar read his cousin's letters from America. In 1877, he opened a branch store for Louis in Belen. Not long afterward, he owned his own mercantile. Letters to family in Germany extolled the virtues of New Mexico.

Oscar's little brother, Arthur, liked what he read. Landing at New Orleans, he worked his way across Texas. Supplied by Oscar, Arthur opened a store in Socorro. In 1890, he married Miss Emma Brockman of Beaver Creek, Texas. Their only son, Arthur Cornelius Goebel, Jr., entered the world on Oct. 19, 1895.

Art started his formal education at the school on Main Street in Belen, some times referred to as "the Lutheran School." The family moved to Colorado in 1902.

Arthur purchased a sugar beet farm near Rocky Ford. It was not large, but it required full-time attention from Arthur, hired hands and son Art.

Art was working in the sugar beet fields when he saw his first airplane. "I knew then that was what I wanted to do," he told folks. He reasoned that flying looked easy. In addition, he knew that, as an aviator, he would never again have to look at another sugar beet.

Anything that went fast would have attracted Art's attention. He owned an Indian motorcycle and rode regularly throughout the Arkansas River valley. Automobiles also held his interest. He had a reputation among high school acquaintances



Woolaroc Museum, Bartlesville, Okla.

Art Goebel unpacking radio set from Ernie Smith and Emory Bronte.

of being obsessed with speed. At age 16, he had his first ride in an airplane.

After high school graduation, Arthur moved the family to California. In 1916, Art returned to Colorado enrolling at the Benedictine College in Pueblo.

Europe was engulfed in a Great War while Art studied. President Woodrow Wilson urged Americans to remain neutral "in word and deed." Art evidently followed the president's advice. When the United States finally entered the war, he stayed in school. In the second summer of the war, on July 15, 1918, Art enlisted in the United States Army at La Junta, Colo.

Art Goebel was very good at the basic skills of soldiering. He did not go to the front after landing in France. He became a marksmanship instructor.

In 1919, Art returned to the United States receiving his discharge from active duty. He joined his parents in California and took flying instruction at Clover Field in Santa Monica. He soloed and made the acquaintance of Juan Leguia.

Juan's father, Augusto, was the president of Peru. Juan came to the United States in 1913. Rumors of a war between Peru and Chile aroused his desire to go back home. He persuaded his friend, Art Goebel, that he could become a flying officer in the Peruvian Army.

Juan and Art arrived in Peru just as the two countries reconciled their differences. Juan suggested that Art should go hunting in the Andes Mountains. Art went hunting.

When he came out of the jungle, he gave flying lessons to earn some money. At a party one evening, a government official asked if he could fly some important documents to the capital. Art was happy to do the favor, subsequently becoming an air courier. After 14 months in South America, he had a yearning for home.

Art purchased three used airplanes, OX-5 Jennies, from United States Army Air Corps surplus, using them to make one sound aircraft. On the underside of the bottom wing, he painted his name in large block letters, upside down, from right to left. He rented hangar space at Clover Field, opening Goebel's Flying Service and offering flying lessons.

Art became an aerial photographer for Pathe News Service and International News Reels. In September 1923, he was first on the scene off Point Pedrenales in

■ See Historia, Page 2A

## COMIDAS

## Asparagus, wild rice combine for elegance

Comfort and tradition are king these days, as well as keeping a close eye on the dollar. That means that the time is right for economical and satisfying meals.

Gone are the days when wild rice was considered a luscious luxury. Because of new, state-of-the-art harvesting equipment, California wild rice is abundant and affordable. In fact, California farmers produce over half of the U.S. production of wild rice.

That's not the only good news about wild rice. It's a natural food, with no additives or preservatives. It's low in fat and a good source of fiber. The nutty flavor and coffee-colored grains add interest to salads, stuffing, pilafs and soups.

Stretch your grocery dollars with this savory soup from the California wild rice farmers. It's OK if your guests ask for seconds. There's plenty for everyone.

For a free California wild rice recipe brochure, send a business-size SASE to:



California Wild Rice Advisory Board; 335 Teegarden Ave; Yuba City, CA 95991, or visit [www.cawildrice.com](http://www.cawildrice.com).

**Creamy Asparagus and California Wild Rice Soup**

2 pounds fresh or frozen asparagus

2 tablespoons butter  
3 cups vegetable broth, divided  
2 cups heavy cream  
3 cups cooked California wild rice\*  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper  
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice  
Fresh parsley sprigs (optional)

Cut off asparagus tips; reserve remaining pieces. Blanch asparagus tips 1 minute in boiling, salted water. Drain and set aside. Cut remaining asparagus into bite-size pieces; sauté in butter 2 minutes. Add enough broth to cover asparagus; simmer until tender. Pour mixture into blender and puree. In 2 1/2-quart saucepan, combine puree mixture, remaining broth, cream, wild rice, asparagus tips, salt, pepper and lemon juice; heat through. Garnish each serving with parsley (optional).  
Makes 10 servings.

\* 1 cup uncooked wild rice yields 3 cups cooked.

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FAIR

Submitted photo

As the University of New Mexico-Valencia Campus held a Wellness Fair, Melanie Whitaker takes a shot at climbing the perpetual moving climbing wall from UNM-Main Campus' Recreational Natural High Services program. Assisting Melanie are UNM Recreation staff members Brian D'Inglilo and Cassie Benson.

Historia: Goebel flew for Pathe News Service

from PAGE 1B

the Santa Barbara Channel capturing the worst naval disaster in United States history on film. Seven destroyers of Destroyer Squadron 11 ran aground. The ships were lost. Scores of sailors were dead, injured or missing. The film was shown all across the nation.

He began racing automobiles and airplanes competitively. In 1924, he won the Jenny Scramble in Long Beach, California. He continued racing, winning three Jenny events in 1925, and three more in 1926.

To further augment his income, he approached Wally Timm at Clover Field. Wally was a flight instructor who also did stunt flying for movie producers. Wally introduced Art to the motion picture stunting fraternity. Working regularly as a stunt pilot required being well connected. Art headed for the top. He befriended Frank Clarke.

Art joined a new acrobatic flying team, The 13 Black Cats. Their tricks included wing walkers that transferred from one plane to another in flight, low-flying pickups of passengers from cars and motorcycles, and changing a wheel on an airplane in the air.

During this period, Art honed two peculiar skills. The first was flying upside down, and the second, flying under bridges. In 1925, he received his discharged from the Army Reserve and a commission as a second lieutenant in the Air Service Reserve.

By January 1927, Art Goebel was doing well. He had his own flying service. He worked regularly with the Black Cats and on the movie lots. He had monthly income from his reserve duties. He still shot film for Pathe and International. He was considered one of the top pilots in Hollywood. The time was right for a vacation.

Art and his friends went to Hawaii. They swam. They played on the beaches. They caroused. And they flew. On the final evening, Art told his buddies, "The next time I come to Honolulu, I am going to come in an airplane." It was one of those pronouncements soon forgotten by everyone present — until the speaker acted on his oath.

He returned to the mainland refreshed. Entering the Long Beach Upside Down Flying Race, Art Goebel finished first, securing for himself world records for distance and time spent flying inverted. Then something big happened. Charles Lindbergh flew solo across the Atlantic Ocean to Paris, France.

James Dole, Hawaiian pineapple grower, found Lindbergh's feat phenomenal. It was just the kind of thing needed to encourage investors to come to the Hawaiian Islands.

Dole promised to pay \$25,000 to the first person to fly an airplane from the mainland to the island of Oahu and \$10,000 to the second. Military pilots were not eligible for the prize and the flights were to be made on Aug. 12, 1927, the anniversary of the U.S. annexation of the islands. Dole delegated authority to develop additional rules to the National Aeronautical Association.

Even before all of the details had been published, pilots began vying for media attention. Richard Grace, a Hollywood stunt pilot and Black Cat, announced his plan to fly from Hawaii to the mainland

Ernie Smith, a Pacific Air

Transport pilot, declared that he was not interested in the prize money. He was going to claim the honor of being first to fly to Hawaii.

Interest in the winner's pot grew in intensity. The California Chapter of the NAA tried to keep entries manageable by establishing a \$100 entry fee. The deadline for entering was Aug. 2 — 10 days prior to the scheduled start of the race. Art Goebel of Santa Monica, Calif., was the first entrant to post his fee.

The committee expressed concern that pilots such as Smith and Grace were skirting safety rules by not competing in the race. They asked for authority to enforce their rules.

Goebel knew that he was not going to fly to Hawaii in a Jenny. He concluded that a Model 5000 Travel Air airplane with extra gas tanks would be the most suitable aircraft for the contest. Art talked to H. C. Lippiatt, California sales agent for Travel Air.

New airplanes cost money. Art brought nearly all of his personal belongings to Clover Field and held a hangar sale. He entered two Jenny races and won both. He raised more than \$4,000. He sold shares to his friends and raised another \$4,000. He found wealthy backers who promised to give him money when the plane was ready. Art flew to Wichita, Kan., to post a deposit.

Walter Beech decided he would build two special Travel Air planes for the race. The first plane went to Bennet "Benny" Griffin of Bartlesville, Okla. Benny's advantage over Art was that he had well-heeled backers, Frank Phillips, president of Phillips Petroleum Company and Al Henley of Oklahoma City. Those backers had already made a deposit and were sure to pay the balance when due. While not as affluent as Phillips and Henley, Goebel had shown initiative in raising the deposit and appeared likely to be able to close the deal.

The modified planes had 425

gallons fuel capacity and a take-off weight of 5,200 pounds. Three of the four passenger seats had been removed to accommodate extra fuel tanks. The fuselage was painted Travel Air blue with the traditional Travel Air yellow wings. Griffin christened his the Oklahoma. He had a radio installed for the purpose of flying "the beam" to Hawaii.

Goebel arrived in Wichita at the end of July with a check for \$10,000 and an explanation. A backer had reneged on his promise. Art was \$3,500 short. Beech advised Art to talk to Frank Phillips while the workmen put finishing touches on his plane.

In May 1927, Billy Parker, head of the Phillips Petroleum Aviation Department, made a flying trip to the eastern United States for the purpose of selling Phillips Nu-Aviation gasoline to airport managers. Nu-Aviation weighed less per gallon than other aviation gasoline, 5.68 pounds per gallon as opposed to 6 to 7 pounds per gallon for other brands. While Parker was traveling Lindbergh made his historic flight.

Parker believed there was a difference in performance in an airplane engine running on Nu-Aviation gasoline. His report, encouraging the company to vigorously promote its new product, was made part of the minutes of the June 15 executive board meeting. Frank Phillips considered the Dole Race an ideal venue for promotion. Art Goebel's inquiry, hat in hand so to speak, was opportunity knocking.

Art made a good impression on Frank Phillips. Phillips put up the balance of the money due on the Travel Air and promised all the aviation gas Art would need.

In return, Phillips asked only one favor. He wanted Art to name his blue-and yellow plane after the Phillips ranch, Woolaroc. The name was an acronym for the "woods, the lakes and the rocks."

Art took delivery on the Woolaroc on Aug. 4. That same day, Walter Beach made a test

flight of the Woolaroc, landing hard. It seemed inconsequential at the time.

Anxious to get to the west coast, Art departed for Bartlesville to show the Phillips people what they had bought into. The following afternoon, Art departed Oklahoma. One of the shock absorbers on the plane appeared to fail as the Woolaroc rolled across the bumpy field. If Art noticed, he decided to deal with it later.

While Art was raising money, more than 30 people had made declarations of intent to join the competition.

(Editor's note: Thomas Hedglen lived in Valencia County from 1990 to 2001. Now living in Oklahoma City, he earned a master's degree in history from the University of Central Oklahoma and is working on a book about Art Goebel. This is the first of a three-part series on the pilot's remarkable life.)

CHURCH NOTES

Thanksgiving dinner served at Calvary Baptist

A turkey Thanksgiving dinner will be served at 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 24, at Calvary Baptist Church, 302 S. Main in Belen. It's part of the church's community and missionary outreach program.

The public is invited to attend the meal and attend the 6 p.m. special service. For information, call 261-7863.

Masses celebrated for missing loved ones

The Archdiocese of Santa Fe's Catholic Cemetery Association and Family Life Ministry will honor the memory of loved ones whose loss is still causing pain to family members and friends. Special liturgies will be held in December in the spirit and celebration of the season, a news release said. Holy Masses will be celebrated at 11 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 7, at St. Francis of Assisi Cathedral in Santa Fe with the Rev. Jerome Martinez y Alire as celebrant; and at 10 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 14, at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus, 300 Mildred Ave. NW in Albuquerque, by the Rev. James Suntum.

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